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**CHFS Focus Employee Spotlight: Marla Montell –  
Commissioner, Human Support Services**

***Montell adds right mix of ingredients to make  
Department of Human Support Services grow, thrive***

Like all good gardeners, Marla Montell knows that the quality of what you produce is directly proportional to what you put into the process. Through personal and professional experience, Montell understands that, just as the right mix of soil, nutrients, water and sunshine is essential for a healthy, vigorous garden, producing and delivering effective, meaningful service depends on good leadership, continuous learning and the hard work and determination of people who feel valued and appreciated.



In May 2004 Governor Ernie Fletcher appointed Montell Commissioner of the Department of Human Support Services (DHSS), which includes the divisions of Women's Physical and Mental Health, Aging Services, Family Resource and Youth Services Centers and Child Abuse and Domestic Violence Services and the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service.

Montell said she was delighted when difficulties she expected, with the creation of a new department composed of agencies that had never before worked together, did not materialize.

The department has “become a strong team of committed, talented men and women,” Montell said. “Even though the issues our various divisions address and the populations we serve are fairly diverse, as a department, we are guided by one shared mission to treat the people we serve and each other with dignity and respect as we deliver the best possible services.”

DHSS offers a wide range of programs and services that provide support and assistance to Kentuckians at all stages of their lives. From school children who overcome barriers to learning, to elders who realize an improved quality of life; from women and children who find help to end the cycle of family abuse and address health issues, to entire communities that benefit from the service of AmeriCorps members, the lives of countless Kentuckians are made safer, healthier and more secure through the work of DHSS.

“We have the opportunity to affect the lives of some of the most vulnerable citizens in Kentucky - from the very young to senior citizens,” Montell said.

Undersecretary for Human Services, Mike Fields, said Montell brings a people-focused passion to her job.

“Commissioner Montell set some impressive goals for herself and her department early on and she’s made great progress toward achieving those goals,” Fields said. “She’s managed a big task with great poise and self-assurance that she passes on to others. It’s a pleasure to work with her.”

Montell has a bachelor's degree in Health Care Administration from Western Kentucky University where she also attended graduate school. From 1998 to 2004 she held the position of Senior Hospital Territory Manager for Bristol-Myers Squibb Company where she received numerous awards, including national recognition for high achievement.

She was also the long-term care Ombudsman for the Barren River region from 1983 to 1986 and has worked as an admissions coordinator and social service director for the Medco Center in Bowling Green.

Montell and her husband of almost 25 years, Brad, have two sons. Tyler, 19, is a freshman at the University of Kentucky, and Hunter, 14, is in eighth grade. The Montell family also includes three members of the canine persuasion: two Yorkshire terriers, Annie and Colby, and Jack, a Boxer-English Sheepdog mix.

Family has always been Montell’s chief source of influence and inspiration.

“My children have taught me about mercy and unconditional love and my husband has been a constant, steady source of encouragement and confidence,” she said. “My grandmother shared with me the gift of laughter – especially the ability to laugh at myself – and my parents encouraged me to set high standards and settle for nothing less than my very best. My dad has shown me by example the importance of treating others kindly and fairly – and to always have fun and work hard.”

In addition to gardening, Montell said in her spare time she enjoys reading, listening to an eclectic variety of music, attending her sons’ sports events and playing tennis and golf. Montell is also active in her church, where she mentors young adults and leads a Sunday morning class for high school seniors. She also holds a leadership position with the church’s women’s ministry team. Still, she said, “I enjoy most being with my family.”

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Montell said she looks forward to the personal and professional challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, which isn't surprising for someone who has a knack for finding the silver lining in every cloud and whose life philosophy is: "Life is an adventure. I choose to make it enjoyable."

### **CHFS Focus Program Spotlight: Kentucky gets \$1 million grant to promote healthy marriages**

*By Anya Armes Weber*

The cabinet has received a \$1 million federal grant to promote healthy marriages and preserve families through the work of organizations from every sector of the Lexington community.



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) announced the grant Tuesday.

"This project will help Kentucky improve the well-being of children, promote paternity establishment and help parents provide increased financial and emotional support for their children," said Dr. Wade F. Horn, ACF's assistant secretary. "With today's announcement, we now have nine child support enforcement projects aimed at developing and testing new strategies in communities across the nation to support healthy marriages and parental relationships."

The project's goals include increasing paternity establishment, improving couple relationships and reducing the potential for domestic violence.

Dr. Eugene Foster, undersecretary for Children and Family Services, lauded the grant initiative.

"Marriage is a private matter," he said. "But when a relationship breaks down it can have public implications on the well-being of a couple's children and on the greater community. Society has a vested interest in promoting healthy marriages."

"The family intervention provided through this grant will give Kentucky's kids better outcomes," Foster said. "Children are shown to be healthier and do better in school when they have two parents. For the betterment of society and the well-being of our children, healthy marriages do matter."

The cabinet, the University of Kentucky and Bluegrass Healthy Marriages Partnership collaborated to apply for the research-based grant. UK will administer the grant through the partnership. The matching funds required by the ACF will come primarily through private contributions and community service time donated by UK faculty. UK's Department of Family Studies will work in concert with the partnership, a community-based nonprofit organization, to manage the project in Fayette and its contiguous counties over three years.

The partnership is a growing network – including local schools, clinics, civic organizations, faith-based groups, public agencies, businesses and other organizations -- that will provide marriage and parenting education activities and cross-promote those activities so that each others' constituents can participate.

While activities may appeal to broader audiences, the project is primarily aimed at unmarried or married couples who have or are expecting to have children.

Family science research has confirmed that children do best when their parents remain together in a non-high-conflict marriage. As a result of this prevention approach, the ACF has stated that it is reasonable to expect child support enforcement issues will lessen.

The initiative will emphasize relationship skill building through programs, events and projects sponsored by the individual organizations.

The initiative will also promote co-parenting and child support commitment by couples who choose not to marry or stay married.

As part of the grant's terms, activities that are funded by the grant must be neutral with respect to religion, though actual programming will ordinarily be funded directly by partnering organizations themselves.

Grant projects are required to screen participants for domestic violence and refer appropriate individuals for services.

The cabinet's Division of Child Support, part of the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), will monitor the grant through the number and progress of participants from information submitted by the partnership. No child support funds will pay for the project.

Greg Thompson, executive vice president of the Bluegrass Healthy Marriages Partnership, said the grant will allow the partnership to help "OK" marriages become more satisfying and resilient, to help fragile marriages to reverse

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their plight and become stronger and to help couples intending marriage to learn research-based methods that can help them nurture the lifelong commitment they desire.

"Much of the magic in this initiative is vested in bringing organizations of every sector in the community to understand that it is a legitimate use of their attention and resources to help the people within their influence enjoy stronger marriages," Thompson said.

"For instance, adults and children who live in married homes enjoy better physical and mental health, so it is legitimate for hospitals and clinics to support marriage-strengthening programs for their patients," he said. Research also shows that, on average, married men are more dependable and productive, and that married women with children appreciate the domestic assistance advantage that their marriage affords, relieving them from some of the stress of child-rearing.

"That information suggests that employers are wise to think about relationship skills activities as a normal part of their employee-assistance programs," Thompson said. "And when parents enjoy a marriage not characterized by high conflict, children do better in every category I've ever seen, and perhaps most notably, academically."

### **CHFS' Office of Inspector General Touts Improved Prescription Drug Tracking System; A First for Kentucky and the Nation**

On March 16 the Cabinet for Health and Family Services' Office of Inspector General unveiled its enhanced Web-based, state-operated database to identify and prevent controlled substance abuse in Kentucky. This makes Kentucky the first state in the nation to provide a self-service Web-based system for tracking all schedule II-V prescription drugs.



The Enhanced Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting program, known as eKASPER, is a true technological success story for Kentucky. "eKASPER will allow pharmacists, physicians, law enforcement and other qualified users to get KASPER reports 24 hours a day, 7 days a week within 15 minutes or less of making a request, compared to the current fax only request system that can take from 2 hours to 3 weeks to issue a report," says CHFS' Inspector General Robert J. Benvenuti, III. "eKASPER is the most effective and efficient tool ever implemented to combat prescription drug abuse in Kentucky. Its benefit will be immediate and powerful and

have an incredibly positive impact on the citizens of the Commonwealth."

Approximately 1,300 pharmacies across the state -- most of them electronically -- report all controlled substances they dispense through this system.

During the year 2000, there were 36,174 requests for information from KASPER; in 2004 that number jumped to 122,469 requests. Before KASPER, it took drug control investigators an average of 156 days to complete an investigation of alleged drug diversion. Under KASPER, the average time dropped to 16 days. With eKASPER it's expected to drop further, plus provide improved accuracy of data reported.

"We commend the 2003 General Assembly for appropriating \$1.4M and Congressman Hal Rogers for the \$350,000 grant that allowed us to bring eKASPER to life as a real time data access program. Likewise, we are sincerely grateful to all the individuals who have dedicated their expertise and time in the development and implementation of the eKASPER project," said Dr. James W. Holsinger, Jr., Secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. "Literally, a physician or pharmacist can review the database 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and print a report online in just a few minutes while the patient is still waiting for the prescription."

KASPER began operating in 1999. The system tracks all schedule II-V drugs dispensed by licensed Kentucky pharmacists. It was developed to help physicians, pharmacists and law enforcement fight "doctor shopping" - when patients go from doctor to doctor illegally seeking controlled substances, and the illegal diversion of these substances.

Under the leadership of Dr. Holsinger, the program, administered by the Drug Enforcement and Professional Practices Branch (DEPPB), moved in 2004 from the Department of Public Health to the Office of Inspector General's Division of Fraud, Waste and Abuse/Identification and Prevention. Under KASPER, pharmacists must report all controlled substances within 16 days of the day the drug was given to the patient. The information is kept in a secure database and is confidential, as are other medical records. Although over 20 states presently have similar prescription monitoring programs, no state provides a self-service, Web-based system such as the one now available in Kentucky.

Authorized health care providers who previously suspected abuse requested a patient's controlled substance history through KASPER by faxing or mailing a form to the DEPPB seeking the information, with the turnaround no



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faster than several hours. Now they can access the information on their computers in about 15 minutes, potentially while patients and customers are present in their offices. KASPER provides the dates, amounts, pharmacy locations and prescribing physicians for any controlled substances given to a patient.

"The eKASPER system is a great crime fighting tool that police officers can use to help curtail the illegal use and spread of certain prescription drugs in Kentucky," said Lieutenant Governor Steve Pence, Secretary of the Justice and Public Safety Cabinet. "This real time, Web-based tool is designed to prevent doctor shopping by drug addicts. Instead of waiting days for a report, officers can have it in a matter of minutes. A quick turnaround time will aid officers in the apprehension of offenders."

State law also allows law enforcement agencies to seek data from eKASPER if they are investigating a criminal case.

For more information on eKASPER, contact the Drug Enforcement and Professionals Practices Branch at 502/564-7985 or visit <http://chfs.ky.gov/oig/dfwaip.htm>.

### Lexington conference is for grandparents raising grandchildren

By Anya Armes Weber

"Grandparents Raising Grandchildren," a daylong workshop sponsored by the Fayette County Cooperative Extension Office, is Thursday, March 24, in Lexington. The conference offers resources and information to grandparents caring for their grandchildren. Scheduled workshops include topics like nutritious meals for children, understanding new parenting boundaries, stress management for grandparents and how to talk to young children about sex.



The event will be from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. in the Fayette County Extension Center, 1140 Red Mile Place. Cost is \$5 for grandparents and relatives and \$10 for professionals and exhibitors. Lunch is included in the registration fee. Registrations are accepted through the day of the conference.

Make checks payable to the Community FCS Program. To register or get more information about the conference, call (859) 257-5582.

### CHFS Focus Health Tip of the Week: Protect Your Vision

By Anne Parr, R.N., Employee Health Center

More than a million Americans sustain eye injuries every year. It is estimated that 90 percent of all eye injuries could have been avoided.



Listed below are a few vision safety tips:

- Always wash your hands after using household chemicals — chemicals can enter the eye through rubbing or touching the eye.
- Make sure there are no sharp corners on home furnishings or children's toys. Pad or smooth out any sharp corners.
- Turn spray nozzles away from your face. Even water, under pressure, can injure your eyes.
- Wear protective goggles when using hazardous solvents. Never mix cleaning agents.
- Wear sunglasses (UV protection) when out in bright weather. Never look directly into the sun. Teach children the dangers of sun to the eyes.
- Children as well as adults should always wear a helmet when biking, skate boarding or roller skating.
- Put personal items such as cosmetics, sharp kitchen utensils and desk supplies (pencils, pens, etc.) where they are not easily accessible to children.
- Provide only age-appropriate toys for children. Read labels and directions on toys before you buy them. Don't allow younger children to play with toys intended for older children.
- Never allow younger children to play with sharp objects such as scissors, pens, pencils and rulers without supervision. And never allow them to run with sharp objects.
- Do not allow children to play with pellet guns, bows and arrows or other projectile toys.
- Keep children away from fireworks.
- Keep children away from lawnmowers and leaf blowers — debris and dust particles can be projected into the air and enter eyes.
- Keep BB guns away from children, even older children, unless you are there to supervise them.

Remember, 90 percent of all eye injuries can be avoided, so start with your home and your children. Follow the recommendations listed above. Eye injuries are often irreversible. Millions of people already have impaired or lost vision. Prevention through education, protective eyewear and planning ahead is invaluable.

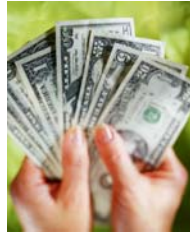
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### Flex account deadline is March 31

By Anya Armes Weber

Thursday, March 31, is the deadline to make claims toward your 2004 flexible spending account.



Request forms, receipts and appeals of 2004 medical and day care services must be postmarked to Fringe Benefits Management Co. by that date.

Check account information at (800) 865-FBMC (3263) or online at [www.fbmc-benefits.com](http://www.fbmc-benefits.com). You'll need your Social Security number and personal identification number to get updates.

The FBMC customer service line is (800) 342-8017 and is open from 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

### First Lady Glenna Fletcher hosts "Celebration of Hope" for breast cancer survivors

In its eighth year, "Celebration of Hope" will be held on Monday, May 2 starting at 1:30 p.m. (EDT) at the Governor's Mansion in honor of breast cancer survivors across the Commonwealth.



"Celebration of Hope is a time to meet many remarkable women from across the state and celebrate their courageous battle against breast cancer," said Mrs. Fletcher.

Last year more than 2,500 invitations were sent to women whose names are maintained in the Commonwealth's only known breast cancer survivor database. Anyone wishing to add a name to the database should contact Mary Sharfe by email at [mary.sharfe@ky.gov](mailto:mary.sharfe@ky.gov) or by phone at 502-564-2060.

Breast cancer is one of the leading causes of death in Kentucky's women. It's estimated that more than 3,200 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in the Commonwealth and more than 600 will die from this disease this year alone. Half the women in Kentucky diagnosed with breast cancer are age 65 or older.

Celebration of Hope was first initiated in 1996 in tribute to Kentucky's breast cancer survivors. As a breast cancer

survivor, First Lady Judi Patton started this event to not only bring awareness to Kentucky's women but also to celebrate survivorship.

### Secretary's Forums scheduled for March 30-April 1

By Anya Armes Weber

Secretary James W. Holsinger will speak to Frankfort staff at four sessions in the Health Services Auditorium later this month.



Employees will hear reports on the 2005 legislative session, cabinet wellness promotion and other issues affecting the cabinet and will have the chance to ask questions.

Forum dates have changed since this event was originally announced, so update your calendars. The forum schedule is as follows:

- **Wednesday, March 30:** 11 a.m.-noon, for supervisors
- **Wednesday, March 30:** 1-2 p.m., for all staff
- **Thursday, March 31:** 2-3 p.m., for all staff
- **Friday, April 1:** 10-11 a.m., for all staff

Regional staff will have access to forum transcripts online and will be able to view a video of the event.

### Don't bite these phish

Whether you use a computer at work or at home, chances are you've received your share of unsolicited e-mail or SPAM.



Many state workers in Kentucky have noticed a reduced amount of SPAM in recent months, or SPAM e-mails that are tagged with [WW SPAM] in the subject line. That's because the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT) has content security management in place today to help control the unsolicited e-mail state workers receive in their inboxes. And while many people would consider SPAM more of an annoyance than a threat, there's a growing trend in the world of SPAM that should be of concern to state workers. It's called "phishing," and it can have devastating effects.

Please read the complete story in the latest issue of Techlines at <http://techlines.ky.gov/2005/march/>.

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## Employee Enrichment



By Anya Armes Weber

*Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.*

A British Web site – <http://brainstorming.co.uk/> – offers several suggestions for group problem solving and idea generation. One technique is called “Wishful Thinking.”

By dreaming of your ideal situation or solution, you can often come up with an idea that can have a similar effect in more practical, realistic ways. Wishful thinking can also be useful in identifying a goal for which to aim. How many benefits from your perfect solution can you actually achieve? You can decide how close your solution should come to meeting your ideal.

Here are some wishful questions to get you started:

- What would my perfect solution be?
- What effect would my ideal solution have?
- What if money did not matter at all?
- What would I do if I had unlimited power and resources?
- What would my ideal solution look like?